

South Carolina Junior Scholars Program

What is it? The South Carolina Junior Scholars Program was developed by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) during the 1985–86 school year to identify eighth grade students with exceptional academic talent and to develop strategies for inclusion into special programs.

What does the program include? The program includes a process for screening a potential talent pool of students, identifying and recognizing those students with exceptionally high scholastic achievement and intellectual ability, and sponsoring summer opportunities in collaboration with participating South Carolina colleges and universities.

When does the program begin? Students are screened and identified in the eighth grade.

How will the students be recognized? Students who qualify for this special recognition will be given a certificate signed by the State Superintendent of Education and a Junior Scholar bumper sticker as well as receive local recognition and may be invited to attend summer opportunities at participating South Carolina colleges and universities.

Eligibility for testing criteria:

- Students must currently be enrolled in eighth grade in a public, private, or home school in South Carolina.
- Home-schooled students must meet home school statute eligibility (statutes 59-65-40, 59-65-45, or 59-65-47) to participate.
- For public schools, potential Junior Scholars may include those students who scored Exceeding in English language arts and mathematics on the ACT/Aspire in the seventh grade.
- For private and home schooled students, the respective associations will determine the selection of potential Junior Scholars.
- To be eligible, all students must apply through a designated Junior Scholars School District Coordinator or a designated Junior Scholars Private or Home School Association Coordinator.

Identification criteria include:

- The newly designed PSAT/NMSQT is the only standardized test used to identify Junior Scholars. More information on the eligibility score will be provided in December 2015.
- Eligible students who participated in Duke University's Talent Identification Program (TIP) during their seventh-grade year, who met the eligibility requirements as outlined by that program, and were identified and recognized by Duke TIP at the State Recognition or Grand Recognition ceremony will be identified as South Carolina Junior Scholars.

The designated Junior Scholars District or Private School Coordinator or the designated Junior Scholars Home School Association Coordinator will report the names of the eligible recipients (PSAT/NMSQT and Duke TIP) to the South Carolina Department of Education when requested.

Philosophy: The South Carolina Junior Scholars Program reflects the growing statewide effort to improve education in South Carolina and responds to the needs of students possessing unique abilities. The purpose of the program is to identify students and provide opportunities that will facilitate their intellectual growth, broaden their individual interests, and promote their scholastic achievement.

For more information about the South Carolina Junior Scholars Program, please contact the principal or guidance counselor in your school/association or Nicole Ivery at the South Carolina Department of Education at 803-734-6268 or e-mail nivery@ed.sc.gov.